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RALPHS GROCERY COMPANY
and THE KROGER CO.

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
CENTRAL DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA

YOSUKE HIRADATE, an individual,
on behalf of himself and all others
similarly situated,

Plaintiff,

v.

RALPHS GROCERY COMPANY,
an Ohio Corporation; THE KROGER
COMPANY, an Ohio Corporation;
and DOES 1-50, inclusive,

Defendants.

Case No. 2:22-cv-03593-SSS-PDx

STIPULATED PROTECTIVE
ORDER¹

¹ This Stipulated Protective Order is substantially based on the model protective order provided under Magistrate Judge Patricia Donahue's Procedures.

1 1. A. PURPOSES AND LIMITATIONS

2 Discovery in this action is likely to involve production of confidential,
3 proprietary, or private information for which special protection from public
4 disclosure and from use for any purpose other than prosecuting this litigation may be
5 warranted. Accordingly, the parties hereby stipulate to and petition the Court to enter
6 the following Stipulated Protective Order. The parties acknowledge that this Order
7 does not confer blanket protections on all disclosures or responses to discovery and
8 that the protection it affords from public disclosure and use extends only to the
9 limited information or items that are entitled to confidential treatment under the
10 applicable legal principles.

11
12 B. GOOD CAUSE STATEMENT

13 This action is likely to involve personal financial information, trade secrets,
14 customer and pricing lists and other valuable research, development, commercial,
15 financial, technical and/or proprietary information for which special protection from
16 public disclosure and from use for any purpose other than prosecution of this action
17 is warranted. Such confidential and proprietary materials and information consist of,
18 among other things, confidential business or financial information, information
19 regarding confidential business practices, or other confidential research,
20 development, or commercial information (including information implicating privacy
21 rights of Plaintiff and third parties), information otherwise generally unavailable to
22 the public, or which may be privileged or otherwise protected from disclosure under
23 state or federal statutes, court rules, case decisions, or common law. Accordingly, to
24 expedite the flow of information, to facilitate the prompt resolution of disputes over
25 confidentiality of discovery materials, to adequately protect information the parties
26 are entitled to keep confidential, to ensure that the parties are permitted reasonable
27 necessary uses of such material in preparation for and in the conduct of trial, to
28 address their handling at the end of the litigation, and serve the ends of justice, a

1 protective order for such information is justified in this matter. It is the intent of the
2 parties that information will not be designated as confidential for tactical reasons
3 and that nothing be so designated without a good faith belief that it has been
4 maintained in a confidential, non-public manner, and there is good cause why it
5 should not be part of the public record of this case.

6 7 C. ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF PROCEDURE FOR FILING UNDER SEAL

8 The parties further acknowledge, as set forth in Section 12.3, below, that this
9 Stipulated Protective Order does not entitle them to file confidential information
10 under seal; Local Civil Rule 79-5 sets forth the procedures that must be followed and
11 the standards that will be applied when a party seeks permission from the court to
12 file material under seal.

13 There is a strong presumption that the public has a right of access to judicial
14 proceedings and records in civil cases. In connection with non-dispositive motions,
15 good cause must be shown to support a filing under seal. See Kamakana v. City and
16 County of Honolulu, 447 F.3d 1172, 1176 (9th Cir. 2006), Phillips v. Gen. Motors
17 Corp., 307 F.3d 1206, 1210-11 (9th Cir. 2002), Makar-Welbon v. Sony Electrics,
18 Inc., 187 F.R.D. 576, 577 (E.D. Wis. 1999) (even stipulated protective orders require
19 good cause showing), and a specific showing of good cause or compelling reasons
20 with proper evidentiary support and legal justification, must be made with respect to
21 Protected Material that a party seeks to file under seal. The parties' mere designation
22 of Disclosure or Discovery Material as CONFIDENTIAL does not—without the
23 submission of competent evidence by declaration, establishing that the material
24 sought to be filed under seal qualifies as confidential, privileged, or otherwise
25 protectable—constitute good cause.

26 Further, if a party requests sealing related to a dispositive motion or trial, then
27 compelling reasons, not only good cause, for the sealing must be shown, and the
28 relief sought shall be narrowly tailored to serve the specific interest to be protected.

1 See Pintos v. Pacific Creditors Ass’n, 605 F.3d 665, 677-79 (9th Cir. 2010). For each
 2 item or type of information, document, or thing sought to be filed or introduced under
 3 seal in connection with a dispositive motion or trial, the party seeking protection
 4 must articulate compelling reasons, supported by specific facts and legal
 5 justification, for the requested sealing order. Again, competent evidence supporting
 6 the application to file documents under seal must be provided by declaration.

7 Any document that is not confidential, privileged, or otherwise protectable in
 8 its entirety will not be filed under seal if the confidential portions can be redacted. If
 9 documents can be redacted, then a redacted version for public viewing, omitting only
 10 the confidential, privileged, or otherwise protectable portions of the document, shall
 11 be filed. Any application that seeks to file documents under seal in their entirety
 12 should include an explanation of why redaction is not feasible.

13 14 2. DEFINITIONS

15 2.1 Action: *Yosuke Hiradate, et al. v. Ralphs Grocery Company, et*
 16 *al.*, Case No. 2:22-cv-03593-SSS-PD (C.D. Cal.).

17 2.2 Challenging Party: a Party or Non-Party that challenges
 18 the designation of information or items under this Order.

19 2.3 “CONFIDENTIAL” Information or Items: information (regardless of
 20 how it is generated, stored or maintained) or tangible things that qualify for
 21 protection under Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 26(c), and as specified above in the
 22 Good Cause Statement.

23 2.4 Counsel: Outside Counsel of Record and House Counsel (as well as
 24 their support staff).

25 2.5 Designating Party: a Party or Non-Party that designates information or
 26 items that it produces in disclosures or in responses to discovery as
 27 “CONFIDENTIAL.”

28 2.6 Disclosure or Discovery Material: all items or information, regardless

1 of the medium or manner in which it is generated, stored, or maintained (including,
2 among other things, testimony, transcripts, and tangible things), that are produced or
3 generated in disclosures or responses to discovery in this matter.

4 2.7 Expert: a person with specialized knowledge or experience in a matter
5 pertinent to the litigation who has been retained by a Party or its counsel to serve as
6 an expert witness or as a consultant in this Action.

7 2.8 House Counsel: attorneys who are employees of a party to this Action.
8 House Counsel does not include Outside Counsel of Record or any other outside
9 counsel.

10 2.9 Non-Party: any natural person, partnership, corporation, association, or
11 other legal entity not named as a Party to this action.

12 2.10 Outside Counsel of Record: attorneys who are not employees of a party
13 to this Action but are retained to represent or advise a party to this Action and have
14 appeared in this Action on behalf of that party or are affiliated with a law firm which
15 has appeared on behalf of that party, and includes support staff.

16 2.11 Party: any party to this Action, including all of its officers, directors,
17 employees, consultants, retained experts, and Outside Counsel of Record (and their
18 support staffs).

19 2.12 Producing Party: a Party or Non-Party that produces Disclosure or
20 Discovery Material in this Action.

21 2.13 Professional Vendors: persons or entities that provide litigation support
22 services (e.g., photocopying, videotaping, translating, preparing exhibits or
23 demonstrations, and organizing, storing, or retrieving data in any form or medium)
24 and their employees and subcontractors.

25 2.14 Protected Material: any Disclosure or Discovery Material that is
26 designated as "CONFIDENTIAL."

27 2.15 Receiving Party: a Party that receives Disclosure or Discovery Material
28 from a Producing Party.

1
2 3. SCOPE

3 The protections conferred by this Stipulation and Order cover not only
4 Protected Material (as defined above), but also (1) any information copied or
5 extracted from Protected Material; (2) all copies, excerpts, summaries, or
6 compilations of Protected Material; and (3) any testimony, conversations, or
7 presentations by Parties or their Counsel that might reveal Protected Material.

8 Any use of Protected Material at trial shall be governed by the orders of the
9 trial judge. This Order does not govern the use of Protected Material at trial.
10

11 4. DURATION

12 FINAL DISPOSITION of the action is defined as the conclusion of any
13 appellate proceedings, or, if no appeal is taken, when the time for filing of an appeal
14 has run. Except as set forth below, the terms of this protective order apply through
15 FINAL DISPOSITION of the action. The parties may stipulate that they will be
16 contractually bound by the terms of this agreement beyond FINAL DISPOSITION,
17 but will have to file a separate action for enforcement of the agreement once all
18 proceedings in this case are complete.

19 Once a case proceeds to trial, information that was designated as
20 CONFIDENTIAL or maintained pursuant to this protective order used or introduced
21 as an exhibit at trial becomes public and will be presumptively available to all
22 members of the public, including the press, unless compelling reasons supported by
23 specific factual findings to proceed otherwise are made to the trial judge in advance
24 of the trial. See Kamakana, 447 F.3d at 1180-81 (distinguishing “good cause”
25 showing for sealing documents produced in discovery from “compelling reasons”
26 standard when merits-related documents are part of court record). Accordingly, for
27 such materials, the terms of this protective order do not extend beyond the
28

1 commencement of the trial.

2
3 5. DESIGNATING PROTECTED MATERIAL

4 5.1 Exercise of Restraint and Care in Designating Material for Protection.

5 Each Party or Non-Party that designates information or items for protection under
6 this Order must take care to limit any such designation to specific material that
7 qualifies under the appropriate standards. The Designating Party must designate for
8 protection only those parts of material, documents, items, or oral or written
9 communications that qualify so that other portions of the material, documents, items,
10 or communications for which protection is not warranted are not swept unjustifiably
11 within the ambit of this Order.

12 Mass, indiscriminate, or routinized designations are prohibited. Designations
13 that are shown to be clearly unjustified or that have been made for an improper
14 purpose (e.g., to unnecessarily encumber the case development process or to impose
15 unnecessary expenses and burdens on other parties) may expose the Designating
16 Party to sanctions.

17 If it comes to a Designating Party's attention that information or items that it
18 designated for protection do not qualify for protection, that Designating Party must
19 promptly notify all other Parties that it is withdrawing the inapplicable designation.

20 5.2 Manner and Timing of Designations. Except as otherwise provided in
21 this Order (see, e.g., second paragraph of section 5.2(a) below), or as otherwise
22 stipulated or ordered, Disclosure or Discovery Material that qualifies for protection
23 under this Order must be clearly so designated before the material is disclosed or
24 produced.

25 Designation in conformity with this Order requires:

26 (a) for information in documentary form (e.g., paper or electronic
27 documents, but excluding transcripts of depositions or other pretrial or trial
28 proceedings), that the Producing Party affix at a minimum, the legend

1 “CONFIDENTIAL” (hereinafter “CONFIDENTIAL legend”), to each page that
2 contains protected material. If only a portion or portions of the material on a page
3 qualifies for protection, the Producing Party also must clearly identify the protected
4 portion(s) (e.g., by making appropriate markings in the margins).

5 A Party or Non-Party that makes original documents available for inspection
6 need not designate them for protection until after the inspecting Party has indicated
7 which documents it would like copied and produced. During the inspection and
8 before the designation, all of the material made available for inspection shall be
9 deemed “CONFIDENTIAL.” After the inspecting Party has identified the
10 documents it wants copied and produced, the Producing Party must determine which
11 documents, or portions thereof, qualify for protection under this Order. Then, before
12 producing the specified documents, the Producing Party must affix the
13 “CONFIDENTIAL legend” to each page that contains Protected Material. If only a
14 portion or portions of the material on a page qualifies for protection, the Producing
15 Party also must clearly identify the protected portion(s) (e.g., by making appropriate
16 markings in the margins).

17 (b) for testimony given in depositions that the Designating Party identify
18 the Disclosure or Discovery Material on the record, before the close of the deposition,
19 all protected testimony.

20 (c) for information produced in some form other than documentary and for
21 any other tangible items, that the Producing Party affix in a prominent place on the
22 exterior of the container or containers in which the information is stored the legend
23 “CONFIDENTIAL.” If only a portion or portions of the information warrants
24 protection, the Producing Party, to the extent practicable, shall identify the protected
25 portion(s).

26 5.3 Inadvertent Failures to Designate. If timely corrected, an inadvertent
27 failure to designate qualified information or items does not, standing alone, waive
28 the Designating Party’s right to secure protection under this Order for such material.

1 Upon timely correction of a designation, the Receiving Party must make reasonable
2 efforts to assure that the material is treated in accordance with the provisions of this
3 Order.

4
5 6. CHALLENGING CONFIDENTIALITY DESIGNATIONS

6 6.1 Timing of Challenges. Any Party or Non-Party may challenge a
7 designation of confidentiality at any time that is consistent with the Court's
8 Scheduling Order.

9 6.2 Meet and Confer. The Challenging Party shall initiate the dispute
10 resolution process under Local Rule 37.1 et seq.

11 6.3 The burden of persuasion in any such challenge proceeding shall be on
12 the Designating Party. Frivolous challenges, and those made for an improper purpose
13 (e.g., to harass or impose unnecessary expenses and burdens on other parties) may
14 expose the Challenging Party to sanctions. Unless the Designating Party has waived
15 or withdrawn the confidentiality designation, all parties shall continue to afford the
16 material in question the level of protection to which it is entitled under the Producing
17 Party's designation until the Court rules on the challenge.

18
19 7. ACCESS TO AND USE OF PROTECTED MATERIAL

20 7.1 Basic Principles. A Receiving Party may use Protected Material that is
21 disclosed or produced by another Party or by a Non-Party in connection with this
22 Action only for prosecuting, defending, or attempting to settle this Action. Such
23 Protected Material may be disclosed only to the categories of persons and under the
24 conditions described in this Order. When the Action has been terminated, a
25 Receiving Party must comply with the provisions of section 13 below (FINAL
26 DISPOSITION).

1 Protected Material must be stored and maintained by a Receiving Party at a
2 location and in a secure manner that ensures that access is limited to the persons
3 authorized under this Order.

4 7.2 Disclosure of “CONFIDENTIAL” Information or Items. Unless
5 otherwise ordered by the court or permitted in writing by the Designating Party, a
6 Receiving Party may disclose any information or item designated
7 “CONFIDENTIAL” only to:

8 (a) the Receiving Party’s Outside Counsel of Record in this Action, as well
9 as employees of said Outside Counsel of Record to whom it is reasonably necessary
10 to disclose the information for this Action;

11 (b) the officers, directors, and employees (including House Counsel) of the
12 Receiving Party to whom disclosure is reasonably necessary for this Action;

13 (c) Experts (as defined in this Order) of the Receiving Party to whom
14 disclosure is reasonably necessary for this Action and who have signed the
15 “Acknowledgment and Agreement to Be Bound” (Exhibit A);

16 (d) the court and its personnel;

17 (e) court reporters and their staff;

18 (f) professional jury or trial consultants, mock jurors, and Professional
19 Vendors to whom disclosure is reasonably necessary for this Action and who have
20 signed the “Acknowledgment and Agreement to Be Bound” (Exhibit A);

21 (g) the author or recipient of a document containing the information or a
22 custodian or other person who otherwise possessed or knew the information;

23 (h) during their depositions, witnesses, and attorneys for witnesses, in the
24 Action to whom disclosure is reasonably necessary provided: (1) the deposing party
25 requests that the witness sign the form attached as Exhibit 1 hereto; and (2) they will
26 not be permitted to keep any confidential information unless they sign the
27 “Acknowledgment and Agreement to Be Bound” (Exhibit A), unless otherwise
28 agreed by the Designating Party or ordered by the court. Pages of transcribed

1 deposition testimony or exhibits to depositions that reveal Protected Material may
2 be separately bound by the court reporter and may not be disclosed to anyone except
3 as permitted under this Stipulated Protective Order; and

4 (i) any mediator or settlement officer, and their supporting personnel,
5 mutually agreed upon by any of the parties engaged in settlement discussions.

6
7 8. PROTECTED MATERIAL SUBPOENAED OR ORDERED PRODUCED
8 IN OTHER LITIGATION

9 If a Party is served with a subpoena or a court order issued in other litigation
10 that compels disclosure of any information or items designated in this Action as
11 “CONFIDENTIAL,” that Party must:

12 (a) promptly notify in writing the Designating Party. Such notification shall
13 include a copy of the subpoena or court order;

14 (b) promptly notify in writing the party who caused the subpoena or order
15 to issue in the other litigation that some or all of the material covered by the subpoena
16 or order is subject to this Protective Order. Such notification shall include a copy of
17 this Stipulated Protective Order; and

18 (c) cooperate with respect to all reasonable procedures sought to be pursued
19 by the Designating Party whose Protected Material may be affected.

20 If the Designating Party timely seeks a protective order, the Party served
21 with the subpoena or court order shall not produce any information designated in this
22 action as “CONFIDENTIAL” before a determination by the court from which the
23 subpoena or order issued, unless the Party has obtained the Designating Party’s
24 permission. The Designating Party shall bear the burden and expense of seeking
25 protection in that court of its confidential material and nothing in these provisions
26 should be construed as authorizing or encouraging a Receiving Party in this Action
27 to disobey a lawful directive from another court.
28

1
2 9. A NON-PARTY'S PROTECTED MATERIAL SOUGHT
3 TO BE PRODUCED IN THIS LITIGATION

4 (a) The terms of this Order are applicable to information produced by a
5 Non-Party in this Action and designated as "CONFIDENTIAL." Such information
6 produced by Non-Parties in connection with this litigation is protected by the
7 remedies and relief provided by this Order. Nothing in these provisions should be
8 construed as prohibiting a Non-Party from seeking additional protections.

9 (b) In the event that a Party is required, by a valid discovery request, to
10 produce a Non-Party's confidential information in its possession, and the Party is
11 subject to an agreement with the Non-Party not to produce the Non-Party's
12 confidential information, then the Party shall:

13 (1) promptly notify in writing the Requesting Party and the Non-Party
14 that some or all of the information requested is subject to a confidentiality agreement
15 with a Non-Party;

16 (2) promptly provide the Non-Party with a copy of the Stipulated
17 Protective Order in this Action, the relevant discovery request(s), and a reasonably
18 specific description of the information requested; and

19 (3) make the information requested available for inspection by the
20 Non-Party, if requested.

21 (c) If the Non-Party fails to seek a protective order from this court within
22 14 days of receiving the notice and accompanying information, the Receiving Party
23 may produce the Non-Party's confidential information responsive to the discovery
24 request. If the Non-Party timely seeks a protective order, the Receiving Party shall
25 not produce any information in its possession or control that is subject to the
26 confidentiality agreement with the Non-Party before a determination by the court.
27
28

1 Absent a court order to the contrary, the Non-Party shall bear the burden and expense
2 of seeking protection in this court of its Protected Material.

3
4 10. UNAUTHORIZED DISCLOSURE OF PROTECTED MATERIAL

5 If a Receiving Party learns that, by inadvertence or otherwise, it has disclosed
6 Protected Material to any person or in any circumstance not authorized under this
7 Stipulated Protective Order, the Receiving Party must immediately (a) notify in
8 writing the Designating Party of the unauthorized disclosures, (b) use its best efforts
9 to retrieve all unauthorized copies of the Protected Material, (c) inform the person or
10 persons to whom unauthorized disclosures were made of all the terms of this Order,
11 and (d) request such person or persons to execute the “Acknowledgment and
12 Agreement to Be Bound” that is attached hereto as Exhibit A.

13
14 11. INADVERTENT PRODUCTION OF PRIVILEGED OR OTHERWISE
15 PROTECTED MATERIAL

16 When a Producing Party gives notice to Receiving Parties that certain
17 inadvertently produced material is subject to a claim of privilege or other protection,
18 the obligations of the Receiving Parties are those set forth in Federal Rule of Civil
19 Procedure 26(b)(5)(B). This provision is not intended to modify whatever procedure
20 may be established in an e-discovery order that provides for production without prior
21 privilege review. Pursuant to Federal Rule of Evidence 502(d) and (e), insofar as the
22 parties reach an agreement on the effect of disclosure of a communication or
23 information covered by the attorney-client privilege or work product protection, the
24 parties may incorporate their agreement in the stipulated protective order submitted
25 to the court.
26
27
28

1 12. MISCELLANEOUS

2 12.1 Right to Further Relief. Nothing in this Order abridges the right of any
3 person to seek its modification by the Court in the future.

4 12.2 Right to Assert Other Objections. By stipulating to the entry of this
5 Protective Order no Party waives any right it otherwise would have to object to
6 disclosing or producing any information or item on any ground not addressed in this
7 Stipulated Protective Order. Similarly, no Party waives any right to object on any
8 ground to use in evidence of any of the material covered by this Protective Order.

9 12.3 Filing Protected Material. A Party that seeks to file under seal any
10 Protected Material must comply with Civil Local Rule 79-5. Protected Material may
11 only be filed under seal pursuant to a court order authorizing the sealing of the
12 specific Protected Material at issue. If a Party's request to file Protected Material
13 under seal is denied by the court, then the Receiving Party may file the information
14 in the public record unless otherwise instructed by the court.

15
16 13. FINAL DISPOSITION

17 After the final disposition of this Action, as defined in paragraph 4, within 60
18 days of a written request by the Designating Party, each Receiving Party must return
19 all Protected Material to the Producing Party or destroy such material. As used in
20 this subdivision, "all Protected Material" includes all copies, abstracts, compilations,
21 summaries, and any other format reproducing or capturing any of the Protected
22 Material. Whether the Protected Material is returned or destroyed, the Receiving
23 Party must submit a written certification to the Producing Party (and, if not the same
24 person or entity, to the Designating Party) by the 60 day deadline that (1) identifies
25 (by category, where appropriate) all the Protected Material that was returned or
26 destroyed and (2) affirms that the Receiving Party has not retained any copies,
27 abstracts, compilations, summaries or any other format reproducing or capturing any
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1 of the Protected Material. Notwithstanding this provision, Counsel are entitled to
2 retain an archival copy of all pleadings, motion papers, trial, deposition, and hearing
3 transcripts, legal memoranda, correspondence, deposition and trial exhibits, expert
4 reports, attorney work product, and consultant and expert work product, even if such
5 materials contain Protected Material. Any such archival copies that contain or
6 constitute Protected Material remain subject to this Protective Order as set forth in
7 Section 4 (DURATION).

14. Any violation of this Order may be punished by any and all appropriate measures including, without limitation, contempt proceedings and/or monetary sanctions.

IT IS SO STIPULATED, THROUGH COUNSEL OF RECORD.

DATED: December 23, 2022

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HOFFMAN & ZELDES LLP

/s/ Joshua A. Fields
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*Counsel for Plaintiff Yosuke Hiradate,
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DATED: December 27, 2022

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Attorneys for Defendants RALPHS GROCERY COMPANY
and THE KROGER CO.

FOR GOOD CAUSE SHOWN, IT IS SO ORDERED.

DATED: January 4, 2023



Patricia Donahue
United States Magistrate Judge

EXHIBIT AACKNOWLEDGMENT AND AGREEMENT TO BE BOUND

I, _____ [print or type full name], of
 _____ [print or type full address], declare under penalty of perjury
 that I have read in its entirety and understand the Stipulated Protective Order that
 was issued by the United States District Court for the Central District of California
 on [date] in the case of *Yosuke Hiradate, et al. v. Ralphs Grocery Company, et*
al., Case No. 2:22-cv-03593-SSS-PD (C.D. Cal.). I agree to comply with and to be
 bound by all the terms of this Stipulated Protective Order and I understand and
 acknowledge that failure to so comply could expose me to sanctions and
 punishment in the nature of contempt. I solemnly promise that I will not disclose
 in any manner any information or item that is subject to this Stipulated Protective
 Order to any person or entity except in strict compliance with the provisions of this
 Order.

I further agree to submit to the jurisdiction of the United States District Court for
 the Central District of California for the purpose of enforcing the terms of this
 Stipulated Protective Order, even if such enforcement proceedings occur after
 termination of this action. I hereby appoint _____ [print or
 type full name] of _____ [print or type full address and telephone number] as
 my California agent for service of process in connection with this action or any
 proceedings related to enforcement of this Stipulated Protective Order.

Date: _____

City and State where sworn and signed: _____

Printed name: _____

Signature: _____